

Sir Real's

UNDERGROUND COMIX CLASSIX

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Bill Sherman 10-12(t)

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Comments:

Not an underground comix, but listed here because its articles and illustrations all pertain to underground comix.

Leonard Rifas interview.

CASCADE

COMIX MONTHLY

June 1978

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CASCADE

COMIX MONTHLY

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Spot illoes this issue are by Gary Whitney and Bob Vojtko

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EVERYMAN COMICS #1 is a free tabloid available from Everyman Studios. "Yarrg From The Planet Glopp" by Anderson, Peterson and Romero, and "The Space Patrol" by Kirk Kennedy are featured in this issue. The back page has a listing of other comix available from Everyman. Send 25¢ for postage (first class) to: Everyman Studios, 432 S. Cascade, Colorado Springs, CO 80903

FLASHES!

WET SATIN #2 should be out this month, edited by Trina as was #1, but published by Last Gasp instead of Krupp. Once again, Denis Kitchen's Midwest printer, he who prints BIZARRE SEX, refused to touch this title, a collection of women's erotic fantasies. "Draw your own conclusions," says Trina. "Poor Denis gave up in despair and offered the title to Ron Turner." The cover for this issue is by Lee Marrs.

Another Trina-edited title expected to appear this month is MAMA DRAMAS, an educational comic for alternative lifestyle mothers. Trina Robbins actually got together eight women cartoonists who are also mothers in this book, published by Leonard Rifas.

This summer the Print Mint will be publishing LEMME OUTA HERE, subtitled "Growing Up Inside the American Dream". Edited by Diane Noomin, this comic will feature work by Noomin, Aline Kominsky, Justin Green, Bill Griffith, Mark Beyer, Kim Deitch, Robert Crumb, and Bob Armstrong, with covers by Michael McMillan and Mary Kay Brown. "It's a 'theme' book, about half personal revelations and half slightly demented social history," says Diane.

Opening July 7th in the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art will be a cartoonists show which will include works by Crumb, Spain, Wilson, Griffith, Green, Kominsky, Noomin, Trina, Gebbie and others. Spain Rodriguez is

assembling this exhibit.

The all-woman cartoonist show in New York will continue through June 17th. This one was put together by Trina, who seems to be everywhere at once these days, and includes works by 22 artists, two from France, two from Quebec and one from England. The show is at Mark Rindner's New York City Comic Art Gallery on East 58th Street.

ZIPPY STORIES #2 will be out in July or August from Rip Off. These strips by Griffith originally appeared in the Berkeley BARB.

In this issue you'll find an episode of "Phoebe & the Pigeon People" by Gary Whitney and Jay Lynch. The strip appears weekly in the CHICAGO READER, available for \$15 a year from Chicago Reader, Inc., Subscription Dept., Box 11101, Chicago, IL 60611. Gary draws this strip, and Jay writes it. The READER is offering it to other weeklies on a syndicated basis, so it might turn up in your town. Jay Lynch says, "Most likely--after we have enough episodes of this thing--this material will all be reprinted in comic book form, say in a year from now." The strips that have appeared thus far are very funny and well-drawn, and "Phoebe & the Pigeon People" would undoubtedly make a delightful albeit strange comic book.

RAINBOW FUNNIES #1 by Gary Whitney is the latest mini-comic to appear. Third Coast Printing & Art Press, P.O. Box 806, Williams Bay, WI 53191 is publishing a series of these nifty ditties. The first one is only 4 pages, but Third Coast plans to expand that to 8 or 12, with 9 issues planned at this time.

In the grand tradition of late-breaking news, the new Official Editor of VOOTIE is Larry Becker, 3557 26th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55406. Lame duck Ken Fletcher will forward all information and sample requests.

CASCADE: How did you get into comix? What was your first comic book?

RIFAS: I edited an anthology of funny stuff with some friends of mine that was published by Head Imports in 1972. It was called GIMME 50¢. And before that, there was a solo comic I did, which was printed by Don Donahue on colored paper--a little thin thing called QUOZ, which I did in '59.

CASCADE: QUOZ?

RIFAS: No, there's no question mark on it. It was a word I found in the dictionary meaning a queer or absurd thing. I was in a bookstore last night just reading everything in the store like I always do, and I found a whole chapter on the word quoz. It was a big fad word in England, where people would use it for put-downs, and for guaranteed laughs. Someone would say something and you'd say quoz, and they'd be humiliated no matter what they just said. But I'd never known that until last night.

CASCADE: What made you decide to do an all-anti-nuclear educational comic book?

RIFAS: Well, what's the question, why I didn't try to present both sides, or why I chose the topic of nuclear power?

CASCADE: I wouldn't ask why you didn't tell both sides.

RIFAS: Well, that was a question; I tried for a while to think of how I was gonna present this stuff, and I thought that I'd be able to tell both sides. But then I thought that they've got plenty of advertising money to get their side across, and this other stuff is important and it takes a lot of room to talk about.

The reason that I decided to do a comic book about nuclear power was I knew that there was this controversy that, at that time especially, wasn't very well known. It dealt with very complicated issues. My idea was that comic books could be used to simplify complex but important issues to give people information they could make decisions with. Then, I

AN INTERVIEW WITH

leonard rifas

guess what kept me going on that in particular was that the Proposition 13 campaign was going on, to have tighter safeguards on nuclear power. I kept going around to all these different people saying, "Here, I've drawn a few pages, would you be interested in publishing this in the newspaper," or "Would you be interested in publishing this as a comic book, as a pamphlet." I talked to a whole bunch of different kinds of people, and I kept re-searching; I kept drawing. Finally, after everyone had said no, I just was so far into it that I kept going. I missed the election; I couldn't get it out in time for that. It's an issue that's going to be around for a while.

CASCADE: The book is doing very well, too. There are plenty of underground comix that don't go into a second edition as fast as yours has.

RIFAS: Right, it succeeded fairly well. I think that's largely because I've got a lot of copies being distributed to anti-nuclear

groups in addition to the regular underground comix channels. The anti-nuclear movement is very organized. There are people who have come together around that as a particular issue. With CORPORATE CRIME COMICS, there's not a worldwide anti-corporate crime movement as such. It's much more amorphous and a less immediate kind of problem.

CASCADE: Are you working on a second issue?

RIFAS: Yeah, I've got CORPORATE CRIME #2 pretty well filled up; I know who's gonna be drawing what stories. I'm getting pretty nappy with it. I think it's got a lot of potential, people are interested in it. And even though people aren't organized around corporate crime, still CORPORATE CRIME is selling fairly well too, which says to me that people are interested in finding out about these kinds of things.

CASCADE: Who's working on the artwork for the second issue?

RIFAS: Trina's gonna be doing the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire story, Sharon Rudahl is gonna be in it, Spain Rodriguez, Denis Kitchen, Jay Kinney, Greg Irons, and I think Kim Deitch will be doing the

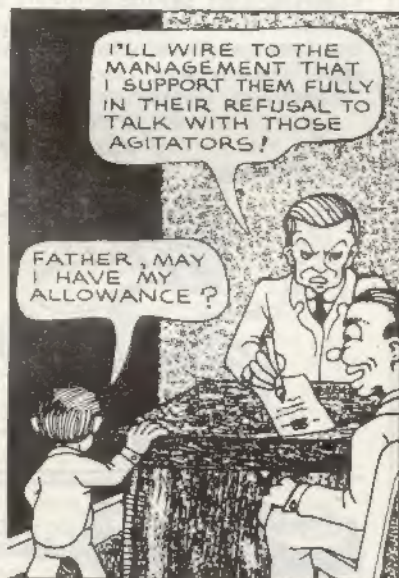
back cover, but I haven't talked to him about it for a while; Pete Poplaski, Larry Rippee, Justin Green, and Larry Gonick. It's been a real pleasure to me, how supportive the artists have been. It's a comic book that generates a kind of enthusiasm among the people who are drawing it. And that makes me feel like it's something that's worth doing, too.

CASCADE: Are you drawing for it?

RIFAS: I'm just gonna be doing the inside front cover editorial, and I'll be organizing the bibliography in the back. I'm gonna be doing a six-page story, though, for NEW ENERGY COMIX, which is gonna be coming out about the same time. That's a comic book about different energy issues, generally. I'll be doing the piece on alternative long-range energy strategy.

CASCADE: What's your reason for going out to Princeton?

RIFAS: Denis offered me a job. He wrote me a letter, said if you ever get tired of California, come out. And he caught me at a time when I was really lonely for someone to work with. So I said, "Yeah, great, when?" So then he had to think about it, and I had





to think about it. But I'm gonna move out for a 90 day trial period. It's \$200 a month, and everyone laughs at that. They say ha ha, \$200 a month. That's the real reason. Like, the rationalization is that I'm going to be gaining experience, and everyone believes that.

CASCADE: You're going to be an editor for Kitchen?

RIFAS: Yeah, he runs an amazingly one-person kind of an operation, he does everything there. And the more I think about it, he must have some kind of superhuman capabilities to do all the stuff he gets done. And so if I go over there, I'll be doing everything, too, I guess. I'll be doing the editing, and running around to the printers, and answering the phone, and taking out the garbage, and helping the guy that lives on his farm move these heavy wood-burning stoves around. All kinds of nonsense that goes on there. But I'm looking forward to it. I really have a lot of respect for him, and the way he runs his business. It will be good for me to be out there, learning how he does it. Helping him out, and making two hundred a month.

CASCADE: How did you like doing a Bicentennial comic book (AN ARMY OF PRINCIPLES)?

RIFAS: Yeah, it doesn't mention

the Bicentennial anywhere in there, but that was the logic of it. I thought, when I started researching it, that during the Bicentennial there would be a big surge of interest in the American Revolution. I don't know how it was in other parts of the country. I hear that on the East Coast there was some interest in it, but out here the Bicentennial was just like nothing.

CASCADE: People were tired of it before it even happened.

RIFAS: Right.

CASCADE: By the time it was over, they were sick of it.

RIFAS: And that's a real drag, too, because I think that if people had taken the time to try to absorb what this country was founded on, then they'd be more hopeful about America. Just hopeful that you could overthrow the state, and ground yourself in some kind of tradition, instead of the idea that you look backwards and it's nothing but duplicity and hypocrisy, and slavery and double-dealing. It starts off, my comic book, talking about ecological devastation, wiping out the Indians, and colonization, and slavery and all that kind of stuff. But after studying that period a lot, I have a whole lot of respect for what the American Revolution was, and what it achieved.

That was another thing about





the media that really opened my eyes up, was how the people talked about the American Revolution during the Bicentennial. You could just tell from what they said, they didn't know shit about the American Revolution, they didn't really care. They had all this stuff to process. Their job was processing information in a certain way, and the way they were processing it didn't seem very useful, or enlightening, or pleasant.

CASCADE: What kind of comix do you like to read?

RIFAS: I like pretty much anything R. Crumb does, Justin Green, and all the cartoonists who were in CORPORATE CRIME are in there because I love their stuff. I like to read Jesus comics, and obscure political comics. I like to sit around the table and draw with little kids, and jam stuff out. Read that as it comes around the table. I like old funny animals. My collection specializes very heavily in Korean War period war comics, and I think they're terrible, but I've got a kind of perverse fascination with those, so you could say I like reading those. I never miss an issue of Carl Barks reprints. I like to read comic books that were done for corporations and institutions, and see how different people approach the problem of hacking out educational comics.

CASCADE: That's generally what it is, hacking it out.

RIFAS: Well, yeah.

CASCADE: It seems like the artist is never as interested in doing an educational comic as he would be in doing something that was detrimental, or let's say entertaining. RIFAS: Yeah, well it's a much tougher discipline to do educational comics, and the rewards aren't any greater, they're usually less.

CASCADE: I'm working on an educational comic book which is on nutrition, not an underground. It's for the Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program, part of the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture. I haven't had any experience with educational comics before, but I'm learning, anyway. It's hard to incorporate any conflict, or even a plot!



RIFAS: Well, it's hard when you're working for the government to incorporate the conflicts. There's plenty of plots. I'm planning on doing a lot of nutrition-based comics myself. I haven't done any yet. My next solo book relates to human nutrition, a little bit obliquely. But it's just full of conflict. It's about this guy that goes down to Guatemala and discovers all these starving people. The reason for

Continued on page 16

AN
ANTHOLOGY
BY

Griffith



1952- IN LANTIERE LONG ISLAND A LOCAL PROCESSIONER ROPES IN HIS FIRST AUDIENCE. THE RECEIPTS TOTAL NINETY-NINE CENTS AND A CARTOONIST IS BORN.

1978- TWENTY-SIX YEARS LATER, IN SAN FRANCISCO, A COMPULSIVE INTROVERT DESPERATELY TRIES TO COME UP WITH A GOOD PUNCHLINE TO PAY THIS MONTH'S RENT. HOW LONG CAN IT GO ON?



CAST OF CHARACTERS

AN INTRODUCTION



Late this year, Belier Press in New York will be publishing the first volume of a two volume anthology of comix by "nobody's dada", Bill Griffith. Each book will be around 100 pages, with the first devoted exclusively to Griffy's pinhead hero, Zippy. The splash page reproduced at left, the bits and pieces on this issue's back cover, and the panel below are all from the introduction to volume one. Done especially for this collection, the strip portrays Griffith and a number of underground cartoonists as oldsters in an "underground cartoonists' retirement center" ("a division of Leisure Villages, Inc."). The aged Griffy in the story is soon vexed by his own cartoon creations, including Zippy the Pinhead. Surrealistic atmosphere builds to a totally absurd climax which, oddly enough, makes sense when read in context.

About the introductory strip, Griffith asks, "Will this strip aid or dispel my dada image? What is dada? What isn't dada, for that matter..." We wish we knew, Bill!

The next issue of CASCADE will, if all goes well, present an interview with the underground's master of the absurd, Bill Griffith.

On Collecting Comix

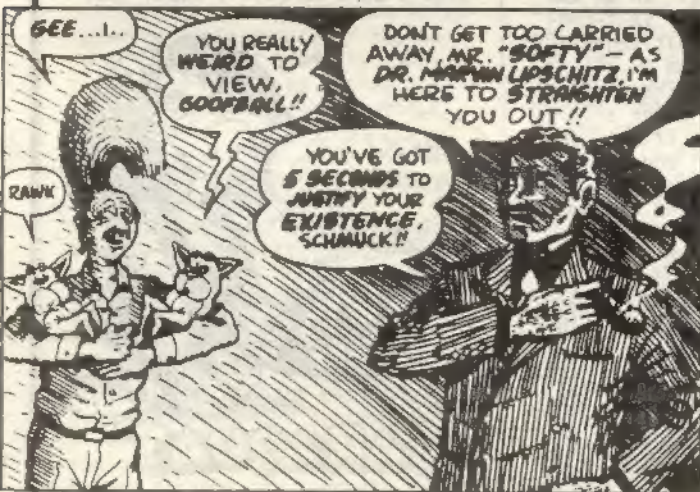
by BRUCE SWEENEY

Comix fans probably noticed that this year's Overstreet Guide showed the first mention of ug's. They priced Spirit 1 & 2 and Help. and designated '68 as the year that Crumb's Zap 1 came out. Pinpointing the 1st ug sounds like a possible subject for a great mid-night debate. I recently tried calling all the comic dealers in the northeast that had an ad in Overstreet and it was depressing how many of these people won't stock ug's due to their controversial nature. (Thank God something is controversial these days.)

Jerry Weist staged a one-man benefit in the Buyer's Guide for Robert Crumb to help alleviate Robert's \$28,000 tax debt and unfortunately had Jerry not thrown in an Ozone 1, he's afraid that he

Continued on page 14

THAT MAY BE TRUE-- MY PROBLEM IS I'M TORN BETWEEN ALAN WATTS AND WOODY ALLEN... I'M ANXIOUS, THEREFORE I AM -- Y'KNOW?



...BUDDY, THINGS ARE TOUGH ALL OVER...

©1978 Bill Griffith

Quick Ones!

BY BILL SHERMAN

DIRTY LAUNDRY #2 (Last Gasp)

Lemme tell you apas. Apas (amateur press alliances) are fan-ish groups that communicate by mail, putting together their own ditto, mimeo or offset publications on a regular basis, sending copies of same to a central mailer who disseminates collated packages of member zines to the full apa membership. In comics fandom there are several apas. And very often members of these apas include as part of their contribs home-made comics. These are generally self-indulgent things, full of in-jokes and personal refs only the apa membership at large is privy to, and much fuh. At least to those members of the apa who know what's going on.

Gee, would this book make a neat apazine! Printed on ditto, say, for a readership of fifty apas (and a few close friends), I bet it'd go over big. In an apa all the cutesy bits of self-consciousness, the derivativeness (in this case swiping from DL #1) would be tolerated. These ain't professional comix, after all: some leeway exists. If only Bob Crumb was a "fanboy" and Aline a "fangirl"...then the rest of the world at large might be spared this book.

I've no qualms with Aline Kominsky's art: it's crude, but that's part of the point. I don't mind Crumb's crabbiness: in the proper context it's kinda charming. What I do mind is the utter lack of imagination in this comix book, particularly when the first DL was so fulla wild and funny bits. (I still chuckle over the

Tim Leary spaceship subplot.) While there are a couple flashes of humor here in the Harvey Pekar banality mode, the book isn't consistent enuff in approach for 'em to posses any kind of staying power. And I'm getting damn sick of Kominsky's Incredible Hulk dialog in the middle of an otherwise realistic scene...

But if Bob and Aline ever decide to join an apa, this fanboy can recommend a couple that he's in.

DOPE COMIX (Krupp)

I've a deep wariness--make that: hostility--when it comes to slick dopemags. Mention HIGH TIMES to me and the dominant image that comes to mind is of Aspen: big bucks and vacuous manniken cokeheads. So you can imagine the trepidation with which this comix fan and critic approached Kitchen Sink's DOPE COMIX. I mean, just



look at the glossy Carbarga cover! All those Fleischeresque insects: chic camp's the first symptom of sheeny consumption-oriented dope rags. Pretty ominous.

Fortunately, DC's innards proved less easy to scope out. The material's about dope, sure, but there's a heady diversity of perspective here. And not all the art's as slick as the cover, thank god. By the end of the book my qualms had been quashed: no paean to uppercrust consumerism this!

If anything DOPE COMIX has affinities to Krupp's BIZARRE SEX: there's a tone of neurotic uncertainty to the comix's stance that's endearingly middle-class. And this keeps the material from being too predictable. Many of BITZ SEX's contributors--Steve Stiles, Sharon K. Rudahl, Howard Cruse--also appear in DOPE COMIX, in fact, which accounts in part for the similarity.

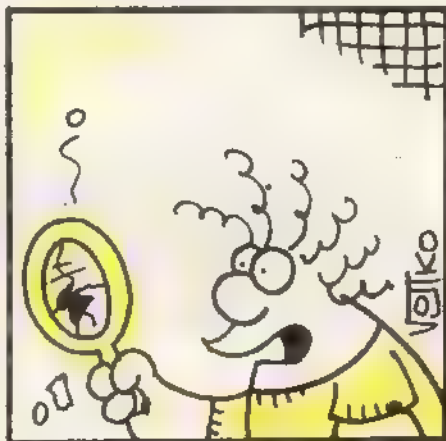
DC opens with a Steve Stiles s-f humor piece (opening swipe's from SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES #6: caughtna Steve!) that's more fulla sex jokes than dope japes: mebbe it was originally meant for BS? Stile's style is still too digressive for me, but his work always has funny moments: he nearly blows this final joke thru misdirected composition tho.

Joel Beck's "Great North Massacre" (St. Nick blackmailed to deliver drugs!) and Leonard Rifas' two-page alien expose of teevee suckin' are more smoothly funny--as are one-pagers by Stiles, Kitchen and Cruse--and Sharon K. Rudahl hands in a typically wry reminiscence piece. Dan Steffan, whose art resembles Stiles, has a tendency to push some of his jokes at the reader (so does Stiles, come to think of it), but I didn't mind this time. Mebbe it's because he repeated Stiles' ENO 801 ref in one of his pieces.

By far the most ambitious piece is Doug Hansen's "Little Bungo in Reefer Land". Using experimental composition, Hansen juxtaposes Windsor McCay pastiche with realistically banal hippie house scenes to show the tangents and

peripheral images of his stoned hero's head. An impressive piece even if I don't fully believe it. (I'm bothered by the huge hat Hansen gives his hero. Altho it makes sense compositionally, it violates the realistic grounding of the tale.)

But what really won me over to DOPE COMIX was a one-page mock ad by Larry Rippee, the answer to all those "fancy pants dope magazines" glutting the head shoppes these days. Rippee's ad is for "O.D.: The Magazine that Gets Down". Way to bite 'em, Larry!



RIP OFF COMIX #3 (Rip Off)

Rip Off's latest anthology book collects the great Wonder Wart-Hog sequel "Return to the Planet of the Pigs", which tells what happened to the Hog of Steel since H-BOMB FUNNIES and contains some of the most inspired stupidity since early W W-Hog; a slim Freak Bros. three-pager; the always appealing "Fat Freddy's Cat" (I'm typing this wearing a Morris tee-shirt--so you know where my biases lie!); a passle of "Griffith Observatory" and "Forty Year Old Hippie" strips of variable quality; and the first of J. Michael Leonard's "Star Weevils" episodes.

In addition R. Diggs contributes a seven-page fable and Dave Sheridan a Dealer McDope. If you've read these reviews in order you can guess my reaction to the

McDope tale, with its uncritically hedonistic emphasis that reads like it could've appeared in RUSH. (Exemplary art, tho.) The Diggs tale is more sardonic fare, with a spaced-out freak falling to his death from a construction site and hearing the secrets of life from god. Tho the dialog gets obvious, too editorial cartoonlike, I like this piece for the way Diggs meshes big balloons and visuals. And for its agreeably nasty theme: a bit more bitterness and Diggs could be another Greg Irons. If he could take the strain.

Some diverse one-pagers by Sheridan, Shelton, Richards, Fred Schrier and Larry Rippse round out the issue. Best of these is Schrier's "Stupid Stories", a ridiculously worthless piece that should be force-fed to comics/comix writers who take their work too seriously.

RED RAIDER (Last Gasp)

Jaxon continues his true-life historical saga begun in WHITE COMMANCHE, and tho this volume apparently wasn't part of the artist's original outline (third volume in the series, BLOOD ON THE MOON, was originally announced at the second) you'd hardly notice. It's a fascinating depiction of Commanche life on the edge of white encroachment.

Main plot of RED RAIDER concerns itself with series hero Quanah Parker's initiation and growth to leadership in the Quonadas band, which will fight an ultimately futile war against white settlement in the years following the Civil War. An intrinsically powerful subject if handled sensitively--and Jaxon so far has done so. His attention to details of Indian life and sympathy for his characters (even the enemy soldiers resist caricature here where they didn't in Jaxon's SLOW DEATH Indian war story) make for mature comix art. Especially when combined with Jaxon's exquisite ink work.

My only complaint has to do



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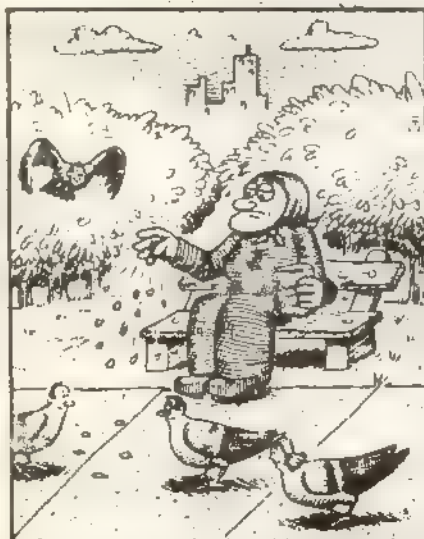
with dialog: I'm not sure it's in tune with the rest of the work to have the Commanche characters speaking what amounts to modern slangy English. (eg. When Quanah steals the reluctant bride-to-be of a pock-faced rival the sympathetic guards chortle, "Boy, is he gonna be bent out of shape!") I can see Jaxon's intent--he wants to make his dialog lively and real in contrast to years of flat Jay Silverheels Hollywoodisms--but the word balloons still read funny, especially when the narration is so strait-laced.

But that's a quibble. Jaxon's Quanah Parker series beats any western offerings the company comics've given us over the years; it makes DC's gory SCALPHUNTER book especially seem false. An important comix work.

--BS78

Phoebe & the Pigeon People

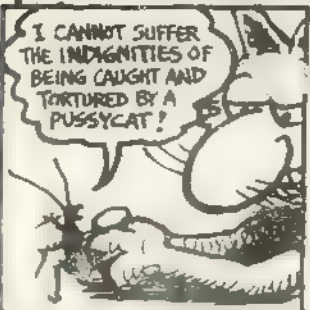
JAY LYNCH & GARY WHITNEY



the adventures of
FAT FREDDY'S
CAT

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Continued from page 9

would've come up with crumbs for Robert..I offered to throw in a title or two but the ad generated such a low response that Jerry never called on me for the titles. Anyone willing to make a cash donation to R. Crumb can send him a check at 290 Mullen Ave., San Francisco, Ca. 94110. If you want to bother Crumb for an autograph, fan-boy, this is the way to do it.

I finally have located one copy of Real World which allegedly was distributed by Krupp, but the meager 350 copies went like hot cakes. I should say that the deal is in process but its going to cost me my spare copy of San Francisco Comic #1 which is also hard to find. The best of the two is clearly SF #1 and if I didn't have a dupe I'd never do it. Does anyone have a spare Can O' Beans #3?

For those of you that recall my mention of the obscure ug title I AM I've located the artist and will try to locate more copies for the rest of you collectors. It

seems that the original print run was 1000; 500 were signed in blood. I hear that the artist is currently editing a new title Best of Cosmic Circus. Its due out shortly and I hope to have more on that shortly.

Anthony Smith is allegedly working on a probable article on ug artist George Metzger. He's been doing a lot of research and is in close correspondence with George. Anyone having correspondence or original art could help by contacting Anthony c/o Backdoor Graphics, 144 Lynnview Dr., Houston, Texas 77055.

Anyone that has not provided me with a combination want & duplicate list should consider doing so. I've been instrumental in finding titles for quite a few serious collectors. I try to act as go-between and take a title or two as commission. I often just do it for the hell of it. Don't send me just a want list though, everyone wants the rare ones. Provide me with titles that you'd be willing to trade. B. Sweeney, 82 Waltham St., Boston, Ma. 02118.

CASCADE #1

Ted Richards talks about Fastdraw Studios, the Air Pirates, and syndicated comics; Tom Hosier on the dadazine scene; reviews by Bill Sherman; covers by Larry Rippée and J. Michael Leonard.
75¢

CASCADE #2

Featuring a Larry Todd interview in which Todd announces his retirement from pro comix; Bruce Sweeney on collecting undergrounds; a preview of Krupp's **Mondo Snarfo**; and a George Erling cover.
50¢

CASCADE #3

Dan O'Neill is spotlighted in a lengthy interview on Disney vs. the Air Pirates, **Odd Bodkins**, the overground comics, and much more; a photo spread on Rip Off Studios; a view of **Vootie**; Clay Geerdes defends his **Comix World**; covers by John Peterson and Darrel Anderson.
50¢

THE EVERYMAN FLYER

This voluminous (88 tabloid page) collection represents Everyman Studios' first venture into professional publishing. Informative, interesting, and insane articles alike are imaginatively illustrated by Everyman artists. Comics, posters, and portfolios intermingle with science, humor, and philosophy in this literary and graphic feast.

Originally produced for free distribution along Colorado's Front Range, a limited number of sets containing all six jam-packed issues are still available at a nominal cost.
\$1.50

EVERYMAN STUDIOS
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it is that the land is being monopolized by big land owners who grow export crops with it, and this kind of stuff. It gets into a whole class struggle. I tried to not use those kind of words very often, but that's the conflict in the comic book. It's based a lot around the stuff in Food First, by Joseph Collins and Francis Moore Lappe. They wrote Diet For A Small Planet. It's a really good book. There's already been a comic book based on it, but it was handled in a much different way. My comic's gonna be focusing on Guatemala. That's one of the things I'm very excited about now.

Nutrition is--especially if you can do it without having to be answerable to government bureaucracy. There's the whole natural food system that's organized around the world, like that the anti-nuclear movement is organized. There's lots of outlets, if someone wants to do comic books to help people learn how to eat right, and learn the political side of food production. There's places where it could be sold. That's important. There's lots of comic books that should exist, but you have to narrow it down to what you can actually make your money back on. I'd like to do welfare rights comics, but that's a very disorganized and impoverished kind of a market to try to produce a comic book for.

There's a lot of stuff happening with educational comic books, and political comic books. I can really tell you a lot of stuff that's happening all over the world.

CASCADE: So you're starting your own mail order business?

RIFAS: Yeah, I've had it going for years, I just never had a catalog or did any advertising, so it's hard for people to know it exists. But mostly it's for the ALL-ATOMIC COMICS.

CASCADE: How long do you think you'll stay with strictly educational comics?

RIFAS: I'm already dissatisfied with the idea of strictly educa-



tional comics. What especially bothers me about most educational comics is people take some information and digest it, and then they tell it to you without really telling you where it came from. What I'm trying to move towards is comic books that are intended to help increase understanding about issues, but do it in a way that preserves the drama of real life so that you can see how these facts get generated.

For example, in my American Revolution comic book, it's just an illustrated essay, basically. It's all of these facts that I got out of books, with pictures to try to liven them up. Whereas, if I had this to do over again, the way I feel about it now is that it could be the story of some people living in a town during the eighteenth century, trying to decide whether or not to participate in the American Revolution.

And with the nuclear power comic book, instead of it being these cardboard characters that were just quickly and thinly erected in order to hold these dialog balloons over their heads, I could've told the story of a town where they planned to build an atomic power plant.

I think that if educational comic books can stand on their own as entertainment, then they're going to go far. As long as they carry the smell of the classroom around with them, they're gonna stink.



